

Veranstalter:	Susanne Scharf
Thema:	“Westward I Go Free”: Representing the West in 19th-Century American Art and Literature [AA-V4, ENG-13, AA-W, AA-M5, AA-M7, AA-M15]
Art der Veranstaltung:	Seminar II
Veranstaltungsnummer:	53-568
Zeit:	Blockseminar, 29.-31.10.2010, jeweils 10-18 Uhr
Raum:	Phil 1219
Beginn:	29. Oktober 2010

Course description:

“The West” is not only a concrete territory on the North American continent, but also forms a place in the American imagination. When we think of the American West today, many of the images and topoi that come to mind stem from 20th-century Western films which, however, have their roots in 19th-century visual and literary representations of the West and its people. In this seminar we will examine how 19th-century artists, photographers, and writers presented the West and their experiences. We will examine how key concepts such as manifest destiny, exploration, Native Americans as the “vanishing race”, overland trails, settlement, life on the frontier, the transcontinental railroad, and the West as destination for tourists were expressed, developed, reinforced, and disseminated in fiction, travel writing, diaries, paintings, and photography. We will study works by artists such as Albert Bierstadt, George Caleb Bingham, George Catlin, Thomas Moran, and Frederic Remington, and writers such as James Fenimore Cooper, Stephen Crane, Margaret Fuller, Bret Harte, Caroline M. Kirkland, and Mark Twain.

Students will get acquainted with some of the major concepts that have shaped the history and our perception of the American West. They will learn to analyze works of art and fiction as well as “factual” representations in the various contexts of their creation and how historical, social, cultural, and artistic conditions shaped their production, distribution, and consumption.

Course requirements (Scheinanforderungen):

A preliminary meeting for this course, at which students were able to sign up for presentations and term paper topics, was held on July 9, 2010. Students who did not attend this meeting but want to receive more than 2 LP have to contact Ms. Scharf well in advance via e-mail (susanne.scharf@uni-hamburg.de).

This course will be held in English. Attendance and active participation are essential. A reader is now available in Ms. Dünnhaupt’s office (Phil 153). Participants are expected to have read the texts in the reader in preparation for the seminar in order to contribute to discussions and to be able to participate in group work. For full 8 LP course credit, students will additionally be asked to conduct research for a term paper, present their findings in class, and hand in the final version of their term paper by November 12, 2010. This requires the ability to work independently and prepare one’s term paper and presentation in advance.

Students are asked to sign up to the class’s AGORA workspace: *“Westward I Go Free”: Representing the West...* for additional materials and possible announcements.

Sprechstunde während der Vorlesungszeit:	Di 16-17
Sprechstunden während der Semesterferien:	Genauere Termine werden noch bekannt gegeben.